

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----077578 260818Z /15
O 260738Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5336

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 SEOUL 6243

EXDIS

DEPT PLS PASS SECDEF AND CINCPAC FOR ACTION

JOINT EMBASSY/UNC MESSAGE

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR MASS KS US
SUBJ: BROWN/PARK CONVERSATION RE GROUND FORCES WITHDRAWALS
AND COMPENSATORY MEASURES

1. SECRETARY BROWN AND SOME MEMBERS OF THE SCM DELEGATION MET WITH PRESIDENT PARK AND OTHER SENIOR ROK OFFICIALS FOR ABOUT AN HOUR AND A HALF ON JULY 25. AFTER EMPHASIZING THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HAD ASKED HIM TO REITERATE OUR SECURITY COMMITMENT TO THE ROK AND TO DELIVER A LETTER MAKING THIS CLEAR, THE SECRETARY MADE A SYSTEMATIC PRESENTATION KEYED TO THE QUESTIONS PRESIDENT PARK HAD RAISED DURING HIS MAY SESSION WITH GENERAL BROWN AND UNDER SECRETARY HABIB.

2. SECRETARY BROWN NOTED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER WAS WILLING TO BACKLOAD OUR WITHDRAWALS BY LEAVING THE 2ND INFANTRY DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND TWO BRIGADES UNTIL THE THIRD AND FINAL PHASE. THIS WOULD MEAN 6,000 MEN WERE TO BE DRAWN-DOWN BY DECEMBER 1978, AN ADDITIONAL 9,000 BY JUNE 1980, AND THE FINAL GROUP IN 1981-1982,

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DEPENDING ON LATER DECISIONS. SECRETARY BROWN SAID WE FAVORED A NEW COMBINED COMMAND STRUCTURE AND THOUGHT IT ESSENTIAL THAT THIS BE IN PLACE BEFORE COMPLETION OF THE FIRST WITHDRAWAL NEXT YEAR, MORE DETAILED STAFF WORK WAS REQUIRED ON THIS QUESTION WHICH WAS OF CONCERN TO OUR CONGRESS, AND THERE WAS STILL THE QUESTION OF WHAT FORCES SHOULD BE ASSIGNED TO THE COMMAND IN PEACETIME OR WAR.

3. THE SECRETARY SAID HE WISHED TO BE VERY CLEAR ABOUT OUR DETERMINATION TO LEAVE THE ROK IN A STRONG SECURITY POSTURE AS WE WITHDREW OUR GROUND COMBAT FORCES. IN THIS LIGHT WE WERE CONSIDERING ADDITIONAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE WHICH WOULD HAVE TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF BOTH ROK AND U.S. NEEDS, AS WELL AS PROBLEMS OF PHASING, AND MAINTENANCE CAPABILITY. ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE WOULD ALSO REQUIRE CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL. ON THE BASIS OF DISCUSSIONS SO FAR, IT WAS CLEAR WE WOULD HAVE TO UNDERTAKE A PROGRAM OF CAREFUL EDUCATIONAL EFFORTS IN THE CONGRESS AND MAINTAIN SOME FLEXIBILITY AS TO THE TIMING OF OUR REQUESTS TO THE CONGRESS.

4. SECRETARY BROWN DESCRIBED THREE PARTS TO THE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM WE HAD IN MIND. FIRST, WE WOULD CONTINUE REGULAR FMS CREDIT SALES AT ABOUT THE \$275 MILLION LEVEL REQUESTED THIS YEAR, AT LEAST THROUGH FY 1981. SECOND, WE WOULD TRANSFER TO THE ROK AT NO COST APPROPRIATE ITEMS OF EIGHTH ARMY EQUIPMENT INCLUDING TWO IMPROVED HAWK BATTALIONS, AND HONEST JOHN BATTALION, 90 UH-1 HELICOPTERS, 126 TOW'S, FIELD ARTILLERY, AND TWO BATTALIONS OF ENGINEERING EQUIPMENT. WE WOULD APPROACH THE CONGRESS FOR LEGISLATION WITH SOME FLEXIBILITY TO PERMIT THIS TRANSFER. THIRD, WE WOULD REQUEST ADDITIONAL FMS CREDIT FINANCING OVER AND ABOVE THE
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ALREADY PLANNED LEVELS TO HELP TAKE ACCOUNT OF OUR GROUND FORCE WITHDRAWALS. THE SECRETARY EXPLAINED THAT HE HAD IN MIND ROUGHLY 500 MILLION IN FREE TRANSFER OF EQUIPMENT, 300 MILLION IN ADDITIONAL FMS WHICH, TOGETHER WITH FOUR YEARS OF ALREADY PLANNED FMS, WOULD BRING ITS TOTAL OF THE PLANNED PROGRAM TO APPROXIMATELY 1.9 MILLION. WE WOULD PROBABLY HAVE TO ADJUST THIS PROGRAM IN LIGHT OF KOREAN REACTIONS AND THE SITUATION IN CONGRESS. THE SECRETARY WAS NOT CERTAIN IF IT WOULD BE BETTER TO SEEK LEGISLATION THIS YEAR, NEXT YEAR, OR IN BOTH YEARS.

5. AS FOR PRESIDENT PARK'S REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL TACTICAL FIGHTER AIRCRAFT STATIONED IN KOREA, THE SECRETARY SAID THAT HE WAS PREPARED TO INCREASE THE CURRENT NUMBER FROM 60 TO 72, SUPPLYING THE ADDITIONAL AIRCRAFT FROM ASSETS LOCATED OUTSIDE WST PAC AND TO TRANSFER THEM TO KOREA DURING THE WITHDRAWAL PERIOD. AT THE SAME TIME WE WOULD INCREASE THE FREQUENCY AND SIZE OF MILITARY EXERCISES AND THE NUMBER OF TEMPORARY DEPLOYMENTS TO KOREA. ON ARMS TRANSFERS, THE SECRETARY SAID THAT HE BELIEVED OUR POLICY WOULD ALLOW US TO ACCOMMODATE THE ROK'S NEEDS ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS, AND HE WENT ON

TO EXPRESS OUR APPROVAL IN PRINCIPLE TO PERMIT EVENTUAL
ROK PROCUREMENT OF THE F-16 AND THE IMPROVED
CHAPARRAL. WE WERE PREPARED TO HAVE THE VULCAN (BUT
NOT F-16 OR IMPROVED CHAPARRAL) CO-PRODUCED IN THE ROK.
WE WERE ALSO PREPARED TO CONSIDER ROK ACQUISITION OF A-10
AIRCRAFT. FINALLY, HE NOTED THAT WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF
OUR ARMS CONTROL POLICY, WE WERE PREPARED TO ASSIST ROK
DEFENSE INDUSTRIES, ESPECIALLY ARTILLERY AND AMMUNITION
PRODUCTION.

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDRESSEES.

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 SEOUL 6243

EXDIS

DEPT PLS PASS SECDEF AND CINCPAC FOR ACTION

JOINT EMBASSY/UNC MESSAGE

6. PRESIDENT PARK COMMENTED THAT HE HAD HAD LONG AND
EARNEST DISCUSSIONS WITH BROWN AND HABIB IN MAY. A
BROAD UNDERSTANDING AND AGREEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED AT
THAT TIME. THE PROBLEM NOW WAS TO WORK OUT DETAILS
WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THAT PREVIOUS UNDERSTANDING.
THE PRESIDENT EMPHASIZED THAT SINCE ANY WITHDRAWAL OF
U.S. FORCES WOULD CHANGE THE DELICATE MILITARY BALANCE
IN KOREA, OUR GROUND FORCE WITHDRAWALS SHOULD BE
ACCOMPANIED BY COMPENSATORY MEASURES WHICH SHOULD
PROCEED OR AT LEAST TAKE PLACE IN PARALLEL WITH THE
WITHDRAWALS AND BE COMPLETED BEFORE THE LAST PHASE.
HE SAID BROWN AND HABIB HAD AGREED TO THIS VIEW IN MAY,
AND HE HOPED THAT THE PROGRAM COULD BE CARRIED OUT IN
THIS MANNER WITHOUT FAIL. SECRETARY BROWN ACCEPTED THE
PRINCIPLE THAT OUR COMPENSATORY MEASURES SHOULD PROCEED
IN PARALLEL WITHOUR WITHDRAWALS, BUT SAID HE COULD NOT

ASSURE THE PRESIDENT THAT THEY COULD ALL BE COMPLETED BEFORE THE WITHDRAWALS. FOR EXAMPLE, OUR FORCES REMAINING IN KOREA WOULD NEED TO USE THEIR EQUIPMENT WHILE THEY WERE STILL THERE, AND THERE WOULD ALSO HAVE TO BE PERIOD OF TIME FOR TRAINING OF ROK FORCES. WE WOULD,

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NEVERTHELESS, DO OUR BEST TO PHASE THE PROCESS WITH OUR WITHDRAWAL PATTERN. THE PRESIDENT WENT ON TO STATE THAT HE BELIEVED THE MOST IMPORTANT MATTER WAS TO AGREE ON THE ITEMS AND QUANTITIES OF EQUIPMENT REQUIRED BY THE ROK RATHER THAN THE DOLLAR AMOUNTS WHICH WERE SUBJECT TO PRICE INFLATION AS WELL AS OTHER CONSIDERATIONS. IF WE COULD AGREE ON THE EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS, THE ROK WOULD WANT TO OBTAIN AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE BY FREE TRANSFER FROM EIGHTH ARMY ASSETS, BY FMS CREDIT PURCHASES, OR BY CASH PURCHASES IN THAT ORDER.

7. PRESIDENT PARK QUESTIONED WHETHER WE COULD RETAIN THE BULK OF THE 2ND INFANTRY DIVISION'S COMBAT CAPABILITY EVEN WITH THE CONTEMPLATED BACKLOADING. SECRETARY BROWN EXPLAINED THAT BECAUSE WE COULD WITHDRAW OTHER ELEMENTS OF OUR GROUND FORCES, WE WOULD BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN ABOUT HALF OF THE 2ND INF DIV'S CAPABILITIES UNTIL THE LAST STAGE. THE PRESIDENT SUGGESTED WE MIGHT WANT TO CONSIDER FILLING OUT THE REDUCED 2ND DIV EITHER WITH KATUSAS OR ATTACHMENT OF KOREAN INFANTRY UNITS. THE SECRETARY AGREED TO CONSIDER THE SUGGESTION.

8. PRESIDENT PARK CONCLUDED HIS COMMENTS WITH A REQUEST THAT SECRETARY BROWN URGE PRESIDENT CARTER AND THE U.S. GOVERNMENT TO SUPPORT THE ROK'S SUSTAINED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. HE WAS CONCERNED THAT THERE MIGHT BE FURTHER RESTRICTIONS ON KOREAN EXPORTS, AND THESE WOULD AFFECT KOREA'S ABILITY TO MAINTAIN ITS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TAKE ON ADDITIONAL BURDEN OF FORCE IMPROVEMENT CAUSED BY OUR FORCE WITHDRAWALS. THE PRESIDENT SAID HE WAS NOT ASKING FOR ADDITIONAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, ONLY THAT THE U.S. IMPOSE NO FURTHER RESTRICTIONS, ENCOURAGE INVESTMENT, AND CONTINUE

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ECONOMIC COOPERATION. SECRETARY BROWN AGREED TO SPEAK TO PRESIDENT CARTER NOTING, HOWEVER, THAT WE DO NOT HAVE IN MIND FURTHER RESTRICTIONS AND FULLY RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF KOREA'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

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